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Letters to the Editor

The NCO Journal

11291 SGT E Churchill Street

Fort Bliss, Texas 79918-8002

How can I help?

Please be advised that I recently read a copy of your magazine, the *NCO Journal*, my first. This was in a rack at a nursing agency by whom I am employed. This is a wonderful and informative brochure for civilians like myself. I have four brothers and a brother-in-law who previously served, mostly Vietnam, also a niece who served for four years and a nephew who has been in two years. Could you please send me a name, male or female, that I could write to. This should be someone preferably from Arizona. This grandmother is ready to bake some cookies and send a quilt. God bless you for the wonderful work you are doing to keep the public updated and God bless America!

Edith Ann Powell
Mesa, Ariz.

Editor's note: We thanked Mrs. Powell personally with a letter and an information package for an organization in Arizona that can help her with her desire to support the troops. There are a host of independent organizations that are willing and ready to help citizens who wish to support the troops. The military currently does not accept "Any Servicemember" mail; the troops can still receive mail and care packages through these organizations. A good place to start is www.americasupportsyou.mil.

Where are the leaders?

My name is Staff Sgt. William Wallace stationed at Fort Knox, Ky, assigned to US Army Armor School. The reason I am writing is for the last couple of weeks I have read articles of Soldiers dying in Iraq and Afghanistan due to vehicle accidents, and have also seen pictures of Soldiers in the war zone riding waist high in the hatches of HMMWV's.

When I was stationed at Fort Polk, La., in the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, as a vehicle commander it was my duty as a leader to make sure that my Soldiers were seat belted into the vehicle and that my gunner was name tag defilade in the vehicle when the vehicle was moving. I could have sworn that at one

time this was a safety violation and was mandatory for the gunner or commander depending on what type of vehicle to be name tag defilade in all vehicles no matter if it was a tank, Bradley, or HMMWV.

The question I have is where are the leaders enforcing the standard of riding in a vehicle? I can understand at a short halt for the gunner to rise up to a better view of the area, but not while moving. I observed two pictures on the army.mil Web site, one from Afghanistan and the other from Iraq where it clearly shows the gunner standing in the hatch while the vehicle is moving. I read in some of the articles of the accidents that a Soldier thrown from the vehicle, but the other Soldiers in the vehicle had seatbelts on. Could this be the gunner that was thrown from the vehicle and was crushed when the vehicle rolled over on him? We as leaders need to enforce the standard of riding in a vehicle whether you are inside wearing a seat belt or riding in a hatch at name tag defilade, and maybe when an accident does happen the Soldier riding in the hatch can have enough time to drop and hold onto something during an accident.

Staff Sgt. William D. Wallace
Fort Knox, Ky.

Journal seeks your input

The *NCO Journal* welcomes your thoughts and encourages you to write to: *The NCO Journal*, 11291 SGT E Churchill Street, Fort Bliss, Texas, 79918-8002 or e-mail us at ATSS-SJ-NCOJOURNAL@bliss.army.mil. We reserve the right to edit your comments for clarity, grammar, spelling and length.

